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A NEW LOOK AT PERSIAN CARPET

Leyli & Majnun





# A NEW LOOK AT PERSIAN CARPET

**Leyli (Layla) and Majnun**

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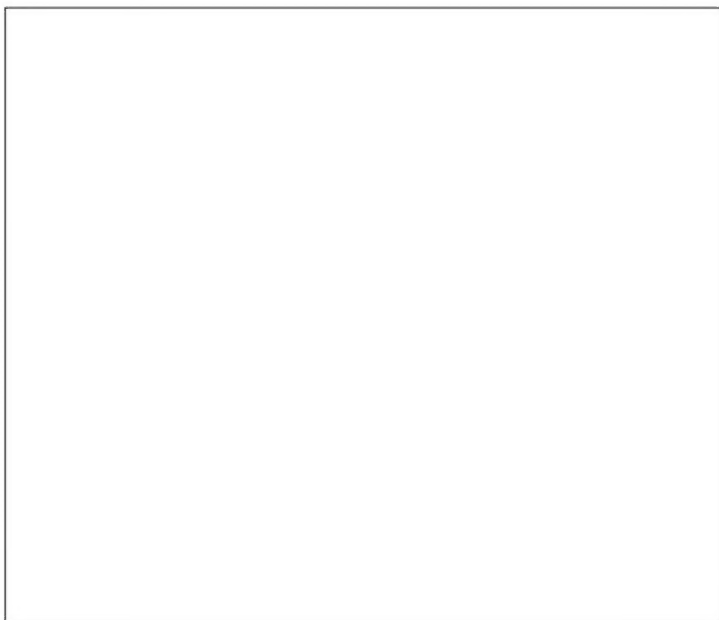
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Culture is the culmination of traditions, rituals and beliefs and popular culture is the culture of the masses without any trace of science, politics, etc.

The culture of a group of people shows their inner and outer struggles. Their deepest desires and secrets, as well as how they feel in reality. The Persian hand woven carpet is on top of Iranians' cultural achievements and fully represents the culture, beliefs and traditions of Iranian people as well as their prognosticative abilities.

In this book, we tried to look at the famous story of Leyli and Majnun by Nizami Ganjavi, the poet who lived during the 12th century. There have been many attempts as visual representations of this story, one of which is implemented on the carpet. As we all know, this story doesn't have original Persian roots and the whole story happens in *hejaz*<sup>1</sup>. This story has been told by others before Nizami Ganjavi but his iteration of the story is by far the most famous and beloved (Sheykhi 1379, 7). This love story begins at a very young age in school and ends tragically during the middle-ages of its main characters.

*Qays ibn al-mulawwah* was born in royalty and was asked by his old father at an early age to attend school. His father, being the leader of their tribe, sent his son to a school in which children of many other elderly and important people studied as well.

Nizami describes the looks of both Leyli and Qays with words such as beautiful and fine. Since this love caused them to leave school, Nizami uses the analogy *La'l-e-kahroba* (amber) which is a metaphor of the lips of the lover. *La'l-e-kahroba* is the reason they dropped out of school.

As the story continues, Nizami explains the situation and sets the tone of this epic love story as the two main characters fall for each other.

The secrecy of this relationship didn't last long as others figured out their secret. They were ordered by their parents to avoid seeing each other. Leyli had to stay at home without any contact with anyone on the outside. Being distant was impossible for Qays and his love for Leyli makes it even harder for him to avoid seeing her to the point that it drove him crazy and since others saw his madness, they called him Majnun (mad).

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1. a region in the west of Saudi Arabia.

Since Qays was acting so crazy and inappropriate, the elders of the tribe had decided to ask Leyli's hand in marriage for Majnun. In a traditional act, they sent many gifts and Qays's father had sent a letter, letting Leyli and her family know of his high place in the tribe Aameri and his wealth. Leyli was assured that after the marriage she will have a high place in the Aameri tribe.

Leyli's father refused this marriage proposal with Majnun's madness being his main excuse.

After this, the story goes through a lot of ups and downs. Majnun can no longer tolerate his surroundings, nor his house. So he leaves home and wanders in deserts. Then his father decides to take him on the pilgrimage of Hajj.<sup>2</sup> Leyli's father hears whispers around the town and finds out that his daughter is spoken-ill-of by the people. He plans to murder Majnun but his attempt ends in failure. *Ibn-e-salam*, a rich young man proposes to Leyli. When Majnun finds out about this he meets with an army man named "*nafi ibn masahagh*". Nafi promises to support Majnun and in that spirit, he moves his army to Leyli's tribe and manages to defeat the tribesmen but he sits down with Leyli's father and comes to his senses and puts an end to his conquest. At this point in the story, Leyli marries Ibn-e-salam but her heart is not with him. She acts cold and distant. At the same time, Majnun becomes a servant to an old woman and helps her find wealth. They search one city after another, the woman seeks wealth and Majnun seeks to meet the love of his life. Majnun's parents die one after another. Ibn-e-salam falls sick and dies without getting any love or attention from Leyli. As respecting an important tradition of her tribe, Leyli stays in her late husband's house for 2 years and after that, she returns to her father's house. She writes a letter to Majnun and asks to meet him for old times' sake. Majnun is living among animals at this point. He goes to meet Leyli. At first sight, after many years they both almost lose their minds. What happens next is quite bizarre. They sit down a day and night without speaking even a single word and simply look at one another. Leyli breaks the silence after a long time and asks why were they silent the whole time? Majnun responds by criticizing lust. "*a pure love is far away from lust. When someone finds true love, luscious desires lose their meaning. When a pure form of love is formed, other forms of love become worthless as it tenfolds the greatness of love.*"

Majnun leaves Leyli. She becomes ill and has no will to live any longer. She writes her letter of will and gives it to her mother.

Majnun hears about Leyli's demise and crawls crying to her grave. He is

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2. Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy city of Muslims.

so saddened by her death that he is unable to leave her. He dies a year later beside his lover's grave.

## ■ THE CARPET'S DESCRIPTION

Leyli's carpet like many other Persian carpets is consisted of 2 fields and 2 borders. The field is divided into 2 parts. The main part of the field which takes two-thirds of it illustrates a camel. The camel itself is consisted of beasts and humans. The litter which has a simple design is set on a woven piece. Leyli's handmaiden sits behind her and holds a sunshade over Leyli's head while the cameleer leads the way. Beside the camel, 4 animals can be seen, a tiger, a goat, a monkey and a dog. The second part of the field shows 6 riders, 5 of which wear simple costumes. The remaining rider has a falcon on his arm and has high-quality clothing.

The border also has 2 sections. The first one is consisted of a chain of 26 inscriptions all around the field of the carpet alongside trees and flowers. It is almost as if the border of the carpet is set to elevate the field and put it at the center of attention.

This carpet is a visualization of the story of Leyli and Manjun. Specifically, the part that Ibn-e-salam sees Leyli while wandering around and falls for her at first sight and then proposes. Leyli's father approves of this marriage after all. The groom is set to take his bride back to his tribe in order to make ceremonial and traditional arrangements. Leyli is however still committed to her first love and is unhappy with his father's decision. As it is clear in the picture, Leyli demonstrates a sad face while Ibn-e-salam is extremely happy and rides with a falcon on his arm which indicates the highness of his social status. This type of visualization is commonly used for storytelling as many parts of the story can be told at once and in one illustration.

Some parts of the inscriptions are undefinable.

There is also a verse from Divan-e-hafez.



As mentioned before Leyli's camel is consisted of beasts and humans. To be exact it is consisted of 15 animals with humans and their musical instruments which make 17 in total. Each of these elements represents or symbolizes a phenomenon. Each of these symbolizations will be further explained in the book. There's a theory that suggests that these types of visualization are brought from Indian culture (Tanavoli, 1368: 67) but we can't exactly tell when or why.

Out of the 26 inscriptions, 5 are located on top and 5 on the bottom of the carpet. The left and the right side of the carpet each have 8 verses which count 16 in total.

## ■ TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Place of origin: Tabriz?

About 100 years old

Dimensions: 197 x 147 cm

Offset warp

Asymmetrical knot

About 30 knots per 7 cm

Number of colors: 10

Pile, warp, weft: thin silk, along with thick cotton wefts

Beige warp and weft

## ■ GOAT

Masculinity, a sense of joy, the creative power of masculinity; It is replaceable with deer and mountain goat. It is also interpreted as a symbol of superiority as a mountain goat stands high above the ground on cliffs. Female goat is interpreted as the symbol of plentiful reproduction and creator of femininity.



Sacrificed at a ceremony for Silvanus and Faunus (Gods of Spring) and as a replacement for the dying god. Sacrificed in a ceremony related to death and another ceremony related to the judgment day in Babylon and Canaan.

### *Boz-e-Fadiyeh*<sup>1</sup>

Symbol of blaming others for one's sins, escaping the consequences of sins, absolution, forgetting one's past by holding him responsible for sins of many others, thus freeing others from their sins. In Christianity, boz-e-fadiyeh is a symbol of Christ who suffers for the sins of others.

A symbol of one's sins and blaming someone else for those sins. The sense of having feelings curbed by human consciousness. Therefore considered to be the symbol of a hidden connection between man and the devil. Much like bull, he-goat is also considered to be a symbol of the father.

## ■ TIGER



It represents both the moon and the sun, the creator and the destroyer. When fighting a snake it's considered to be the symbol of heavens and the skies and while fighting a lion or an eastern dragon is a symbol of the moon and the gods. It also represents cruelty, dominance, power and mother earth.

1. In Farsi, "Boz" means goat. "Fadiyeh" is another name for sacrifice or ransom.

In royalty tiger manifests power.

Two interpretations of the tiger have been offered which are easily reconciled: 'It is associated with Dionysus, and is a symbol of wrath and cruelty'; 'In China, it is symbolic of darkness and of the new moon'. For darkness is always identical with the darkness of the soul, and corresponds to that state which the Hindus term "tamas" and which falls within the general symbolism of level, and also denotes the unbridled expression of the base powers of the instincts. Now, in China the tiger seems to play a "rôle" comparable with that of the lion in African and Western cultures: both animals—like the dragon—take on two different characters—as the wild beast and as the tamed animal. This is what lies behind the tiger as an allegorical expression of strength and valour in the service of righteousness. Five mythic tigers together constitute a symbol which is invested with the same meaning as the tetramorphs in Christian tradition, in so far as they are the defenders of the spatial order against the forces of chaos. The Red Tiger reigns in the south, his season being summer and his Element fire; the Black Tiger reigns in the north—winter is his season, and his Element water; the Blue Tiger reigns in the East, in the spring and amidst vegetation; the White Tiger predominates in the west, in autumn and among the metals; and, finally, the Yellow Tiger (solar in colour) inhabits the earth and reigns supreme over all the other tigers. This Yellow Tiger is located in the 'Centre', as the Emperor was situated in the heart of China and as China lies at the centre of the world. This quaternary division plus the centre as the fifth Element is, as Jung has shown, of archetypal significance in the symbolism of situation. When the tiger appears in association with other animals, his symbolic significance varies according to the relative status of the animals within the hierarchy: for instance, the tiger struggling with a reptile stands for the superior principle, but the converse applies if it is locked in combat with a lion or a winged being.

## DOG

Fidelity, watchfulness, nobility (dogs and falcons being emblems of the nobility); Plutarch says that dogs symbolize 'the conservative, watchful, philosophical principle of life'. 'The dog, raising his rough neck, his face alternately black and golden, denoted the messenger





going hence and thence between the Higher and Infernal powers' (Apuleius). A keeper of boundaries between this world and the next; guardian of the passage; guardian of the underworld; attendants on the dead; a psychopomp. When a lunar animal, with the hare and lizard, the dog is an intermediary between moon deities; also solar in the Far East a yang animal in the daytime, but yin at night. In Egypt and Sumer it is solar. It is associated with all messenger gods and gods of destruction and is an attribute of Anubis and Hermes/Mercury. The dog and otter are special among the 'clean' animals of Zoroastrianism; to kill them is a sin. Hecate has her dogs of war; the northern "Garmr", 'the devourer', is often depicted as a dog and "Brimo", as destroyer, is accompanied by a dog. The dog sometimes accompanies the Good Shepherd and usually is the companion of healers, such as Aesculapius, and of all huntresses and Mother Goddesses, the Mother Goddess often being called 'the Bitch' and portrayed as a whelping bitch. A black dog is sorcery, diabolical powers, the damned, death. Cats and dogs, as witches' familiars, can represent witches as rain-makers, hence 'raining cats and dogs'.

Dogs as winds can chase away the boar of winter or drought. The "Cynocephalus" destroys or imprisons the enemies of light. The dog is often a culture hero or mythical ancestor. Also, having been a companion in life it continues as such after death and intercedes and interprets between the dead and the gods of the underworld. It has also the qualities of a fire-bringer and master of fire, having either invented fire by friction or, in some cultures, watched the masculine secret of fire-making and then reported it to the women. When associated with fire it takes on a sexual symbolism, fire and sexual power being related.

Dog in Islamic culture: dog in Islamic religion is considered an abomination except when it's used as a guard.

Dog in Persian culture: "sagdid": an ancient custom (also a white dog with four white or yellow eyes). May have been considered as the one to usher the soul of the deceased into the afterlife since the dog accompanied those who mourned in funerals. In funerals dog sat beside the body of the deceased. A woman who had died while giving birth, was buried at the presence of two dogs, one for the deceased mother and one for the deceased child.

Mithraism: dog is the one to usher the soul to the afterlife. Associated with the sacrificial bull and was assigned to scorpion or snake.

Dog is the symbol of fidelity. In that regard, dog is mostly found in the carvings during the Middle Ages, as kneeled before women, much like lion, which is associated with masculinity and worthiness. In Christian symbolism dog has another meaning inspired by its role as the protector of a herd of sheep. Dog is sometimes interpreted as priest in Christianity.

In a much deeper interpretation of the last statement, dog (like vulture) accompanies the dead during what is called "the night passage across the sea" which is related to symbols of mother and the judgement day.

In alchemy, dog is more of a sign than a symbol. A dog eaten by a wolf is a sign of gold which is gone through antimony to be purified.

## CAMEL

In Persian culture camel is related to snake-dragon



Traditionally considered in curious relation with the dragon and with winged serpents, for, according to the Zohar, the serpent in the Garden of Eden was a kind of 'flying camel'. Similar allusions are to be found in the Persian Zend-Avesta.

## MONKEY

Shamelessness, curiosity, mischief and bad desires. The three wise monkeys with closed eyes, ears and mouths which indicate the famous motto: see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

## RABBIT

A lunar animal, the rabbit and hare both live in the moon and are associated with Moon goddesses and Earth Mothers. In Aztec symbolism the Moon is a rabbit or hare. In China figures of white rabbits were made for the Moon Festival. The rabbit or hare is the trickster of the Indians of the eastern forests of America. Also symbolizes fecundity and lust, but wearing rabbit skins in rites denotes docility and humility before the Great Spirit. Also: The Easter, Hare.

## HARE

Hare a lunar animal, attribute of all moon deities; as closely connected with the moon it represents rebirth, rejuvenation, resurrection, also intuition, 'light in darkness'. It is often associated with sacrificial fire and 'life through death'. It is universally a fertility symbol and typifies feminine periodicity; it is a love gage; timidity; the inverted; crafty wisdom; fleetness. The hare in the moon is almost universal and, as lunar, with the dog and lizard it acts as an intermediary between lunar deities and man. In the West the white hare symbolizes snow; the March hare madness. A hare's head or foot is a specific against witchcraft, but the hare is often the servant or companion of witches.

In the Egyptian series of hieroglyphs, the hare is a determinative sign defining the concept of being, and symbolic in consequence of elemental existence. Among the Algonquin Indians, the Great Hare is the animal-demiurge. The myth was also known to the Egyptians. In Greece, the lunar goddess, Hecate, was associated with hares. The German equivalent of Hecate, the goddess "Harek", was accompanied by hares. In general, the hare is a symbol of procreation; it is ambivalent in that it may be considered as naturally amoral or moral. The Hebrews regarded it as an 'unclean' animal (Deuteronomy xiv, 7). For "Rabanus Maurus", it symbolized lasciviousness and fecundity. However, it had also become, by Gothic times, an allegorical figure of fleetness and of diligent service, for it is to be found on many Gothic sepulchers as an emblem in this particular sense—a sense subsidiary to that outlined above. A feminine character is inseparable from the fundamental symbolization of the hare; hence it is not surprising to find that it was the second of the twelve emblems of the Emperor of China, symbolic of the Yin force in the life of the monarch. The Chinese conceived the hare as an animal of augury and it was said to live on the moon. animal of augury and it was said to live on the moon.



Traces of hare can be found in all sorts of mythology and tale. In order to fully comprehend this lunar creature, one must pay attention to importance of its many symbolic definitions. Hare share a lot of similarities to the point that even their differences are quite alike. The hare and the moon are closely bound to the goddess mother-earth. This lunar creature is a symbol of water, fertility, herbs and eternal life in all of its forms. Hare carry great mysteries. In their world, death purifies and regenerates life; many souls live in fear of night and find other creatures uncomprehending.

Hare is a lunar creature since it sleeps during the day and hops around at night. It knows how to appear and disappear in the dark and quiet of the night. Hare in Grand Larousse encyclopédique is a symbol of procreation since hare can multiply rapidly.

Sometimes the moon is presented in form of a hare. In other cases, hare is the symbol of the moon's power.

Even today in Anatolia, the Shia farmers forbid consuming hare's meat. They believe that this animal is the reincarnation of Imam Ali. They have high regards for Imam Ali since he is believed to have sacrificed his son for the sake of humans. There is a well-known anecdote that if Mohammad is the house of knowledge, Ali is the door to this house. This anecdote is mentioned in "Bektashi" poems.

From the story of "*pahlavan panbeh*"<sup>1</sup> it is concluded that hare represents puberty since after puberty there are no more childish excuses in life.

The monkey and the fox are the closest related to hare. They all accompanied Hecate and fed the youth but captured all crossroads on their way and ended up inventing magic.

## LAMB

The tradition of sacrificing a sheep has almost always been there among followers of different religions. This sacrificial tradition has gone from Judaism to Christianity and Islam. It was first held during the Jewish Easter, then in the Christian Easter and lastly in Islam's "*eid-e-qorban*"<sup>2</sup>. While inspecting the cultural similarities between these 3 religions and how this sacrificial tradition

1. An expression in Persian culture. Describes someone of fake courage and bravado who despite his rough appearance is coward at heart.

2. "Eid" in Arabic and Farsi is the equivalent of festival. "Qorban" in the two middle-eastern languages is used when addressing a close friend as if he is called "brother".

was carried out, we find uncanny likenesses. Spilling the lamb's blood without a doubt is related to the spilled blood of Jesus on the cross. That's why the lamb's spilled blood is known a savior. In Judaism, the frame of the door of the house and the inscriptions on it will be saturated by the sacrificial blood of the lamb to banish evil eye and bad luck from that house.

Gentleness; young innocence; meekness; purity; the unblemished. Sorcerers are powerless against its innocence. Lambs symbolize neophytes and mystic rebirth. The lamb with the lion depicts the paradise state.

## MOUSE

Chthonic; the powers of darkness; incessant movement; senseless agitation; turbulence.

## RAT

A plague animal; death; decay; the underworld.

The rat occurs in association with infirmity and death. It was an evil-doing deity of the plague in Egypt and China. The mouse, in mediaeval symbolism, is associated with the devil. A phallic implication has been superimposed upon it, but only in so far as it is dangerous or repugnant.

## SNAKE

Snake in an Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols (by J.C. Cooper):

Snake in Persian culture: An aspect of "Ahriman" or "Angra Mainu", the Serpent of Darkness, the liar. The Persian snake Azi-dahak is "the throttler", enemy of the sun god.

Snake in Islamic culture: Closely associated with life, the serpent is "El-hayyah" and life "El-hyat" and El-Hay, one of the chief names of God which signifies the vivifying, that which confers life, the life principle rather than the merely living; that which both animates and maintains, which imparts life and is the life-principle itself.

## HEDGEHOG

This animal had a great place in Persian and central Asian mythology. In "Buryatia" and In "Kikuyu" culture in east Africa, the hedgehog is known as the inventor of fire. The hedgehog, being a wise advisor to mankind, has such a high cultural value that the moon and the sun find the lost time with its help. In some cultures, the hedgehog is the inventor of agriculture. To summarize, the hedgehog is the creator of civilization and is associated with civilizing the Turkic wanderers in deserts.

## FROG

The frog represents the transition from the Element of earth to that of water, and vice versa. This connexion with natural fecundity is an attribute derived from its amphibious character, and for the same reason it is also a lunar animal; there are many legends which tell of a frog on the moon, and it figures in many rites invoking rainfall.

Frog is Lunar and a rain-bringer; fertility; fecundity; eroticism. As rising from the waters it is renewal of life and resurrection; it is also life and resurrection as possessing the moist skin of life as opposed to the dryness of death. The Great Frog, supporting the universe, represents the dark and undifferentiated prima materia; the watery element and the primordial slime, the basis of created matter.



## HAWK/FALCON

With its curved claws, represents usury, aggressiveness and greed. Since a female hawk is stronger than a male, it is a symbol of matriarchy in a couple's relationship.

Falcon shares much of the solar symbolism of the eagle with which it can change places. It is aspiration; victory; ascension through all planes. It also typifies freedom, hence hope for all those in bondage, either moral or spiritual.

## CAT

With its eyes being variable, the cat symbolizes the varying power of the sun and the waxing and waning of the moon and the splendor of the night; it also denotes stealth; desire; liberty. As black it is lunar, evil and death; it is only in modern times that a black cat has been taken to signify good luck.

In Islamic culture, the cat is quite popular, unless it's a black cat. According to myths and legends, rats were hurting people in Noah's ark. Noah rubbed his hand on the lion's head, then the lion sneezed and a couple of cats came out of his nose. That's why the cat and the lion share a similar look. Muslims believe that cat is the bringer of blessings but a fully-black cat carries magical powers. Meat of the black cat is used in exorcism in Islam. The spleen of the black cat has the power to stop a woman from bleeding during menstruations. The blood of the black cat is used to write talismans. Legends say that a cat has seven lives. Demons and jinns appear in the form of a cat. In Iran, when a black cat is tortured, the torturer's doppelgänger haunts him. A person's doppelgänger is a jinn that is born with him/her and never leaves their side but isn't allowed to hurt them in anyway. The black cat also resembles a jinn that if walks into a house, the owner must greet it. In many Islamic traditions the black cat is a symbol of death and darkness. Islamic traditions the black cat is a symbol of death and darkness.

## LION

The lion is a solar symbol and as the king of the jungle and all animals it represents the benefits of being in power. Even though it represents power, justice and reason, it can also be the symbol of selfishness and pride. It can also be interpreted that the lion while symbolizing an almighty king (even a father figure or a teacher) is blinded by the shine of its power. But since he wants to be a leader to everyone else, he becomes a callus dictator. Due to that, the lion can be just as irritating and unbearable as he is admirable and powerful. In the Gita (chapter 10, verse 30) it is mentioned that Krishna is like a lion; Buddha, Jesus and Imam Ali have all been mentioned in their respective religions as a lion. The Old Iranian flag carried the design of a lion with a crown as a symbol of "shir-e-khoda" Imam Ali.

Ambivalent as both solar and lunar, good and evil. As solar it represents the heat of the sun, the splendour and power of the noonday sun; the fiery principle; majesty; strength; courage; fortitude; justice; law; military might; the King of the Beasts; but it is also cruelty; ferocity; and the sub-human modes of life; it is a symbol of war and an attribute of war gods. As lunar it is the lioness accompanying the Great Mother, or drawing her chariot, and typifying the maternal instinct; it is often depicted with virgin warrior goddesses; goddesses of Crete, Mycenae, Phrygia, Thrace, Syria, Lycia and Sparta all have the lioness as an emblem; it also appears with the winged Artemis, Cybele, Fortuna and the Gorgons, and in India and Tibet as an attribute of Tara, as an earth and maternal symbol.

The lion and the unicorn represent the contending solar-lunar, male-female forces. The lion killing the boar depicts the power of the sun killing the boar of winter. The lion and dragon devouring each other signifies union without loss of identity. The lion and lamb together symbolize Paradise regained and primordial unity, the Golden Age; also the end of the temporal world and freedom from conflict. The solar hero slaying the lion is the sun god modifying the scorching heat of the noonday sun. Macrobius says "that lions are emblematic of the Earth, 'Mother of the Gods. Pairs of lions are 'the master of double strength, the guardians of doors, gates and treasure, or the Tree of Life. They often support a solar symbol and represent vigilance and courage. The winged lion, or griffin, can depict the union of two natures or the androgyne. The green lion is the young corn god before maturing into the golden corn. Lions' heads as waterspouts or fountains depict the diurnal sun, the gift of water exhaled over the earth. The lion throne represents the subjugation of the cosmic forces.

In Islamic culture: lion is supporting the forces of good against evil.

In Persian culture: lion is a sign of royalty, the power of the sun and light.

The lion corresponds principally to gold or the 'subterranean sun', and to the sun itself, and hence it is found as a symbol of sun-gods such as Mithras. The young lion corresponds to the rising sun, the old or infirm lion to the setting sun.

## HORSE

Horse Ambivalent as it is solar power when the white, golden or fiery horses appear with sun gods, drawing their chariots, but lunar as the humid element, the sea and chaos and the steeds of the oceanic gods; thus the horse is both a life and a death symbol, solar and lunar. It also symbolizes the intellect; wisdom; mind; reason; nobility; light; dynamic power; fleetness; the swiftness of thought; the swift passage of life; it is also instinctual animal nature; magic powers of divination; the wind; the waves of the sea. The horse appears also with fertility gods and the **V** anir. It can be ridden by the Devil and then becomes phallic, or by the Wild Huntsman or the "Erl-King", when it becomes death. The winged horse is the sun or the Cosmic Horse, as is also the white horse, and represents pure intellect; the unblemished; innocence; life and light, and is ridden by heroes.

At a later date the horse replaced the bull as a sacrificial animal; both represented the sky and fertility gods, masculine virility and fertility as well as the chthonic and humid powers. The white horse of the ocean is also related to both the fiery and humid principles. The lion slaying the horse or bull depicts the sun drying up moisture and mists. The black horse is funerary and heralds death and symbolizes chaos; it appears at the twelve days of chaos between the old and New Year. The sacrifice of the October horse signified the death of death.

In Islamic culture: Redemption, wealth.

In Persian culture: Anahita's chariot is drawn by 4 white horses called "wind", "rain", "clouds" and "sleet". These 4 horses and their gods drew the chariots of the magi.



In Mithraic culture: White horses draw the chariot of the sun god.

## ■ ROYAL HORSE

The royal white horse is used by many great heroes and holy icons when ascending. All great Christian names ride such a magnificent horse. Prophet Mohammad also rode a white horse during his ascension.

## ■ DOE

Doe is a sign of femininity. It is a mother to children. Its beauty lies in the shine of its eyes. The gaze of a doe resembles the gaze of a young woman. In fairy tales princesses turn into does. Even today in Konya people believe that with every new-born doe a holy light shines upon the world. This herbivore creature exists in all of eastern mythology. It can also be found on visual patterns of ancient war slates.

## ■ Music

Sacred music is symbolic of nature in her transitory and ever-changing aspect; it is the relative, but contains an underlying reality, the Absolute. The music of the spheres signifies the harmony of the spheres and of life. Musical instruments denote felicity; some pipe instruments are phallic and many of the stringed instruments represent the female form.

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